

Washington power struggle over strategic response

by Criton Zoakos

Throughout the first week of May, an intense political struggle has been going on in Washington over to how best prepare the country to deal with what is now generally recognized as an imminently pending "Cuban missile crisis" type of confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union. The term "Cuban missile crisis-type," previously employed in print only by this review, was adopted by the editors of the New York Times on May 1, for the purpose of proposing a Kissinger-brokered summit meeting between President Reagan and Soviet Communist Party Secretary-General Yuri Andropov.

Vice-President George Bush, in a May 4 speech before the Association of American Chambers of Commerce in Latin-America, addressed the same subject in the following way: "Let me explain the President's meaning in the following way: little more than 20 years ago, an American President went before the American people to announce that he was ordering a naval quarantine of Cuba because offensive Soviet missiles had been placed in that country. We remember the Cuban missile crisis and the threat to peace that it posed. We should also recall what led to that crisis—a miscalculation on the part of our adversaries as a result of our failure over the years to come to grips with a threat to our hemisphere. It was a failure that ultimately led to a major confrontation between the world's two great powers. That is the kind of crisis President Reagan seeks to prevent."

The strategy-making establishment in Washington is split

over how to handle this crisis into two basic schools of thought. Among the official spokesmen for the first are President Reagan and Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger: they propose to scrap the strategic doctrine of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) as a precondition for resolving the looming confrontation.

Opposition to Reagan strategy

The second school of thought proposes to retain MAD at all costs.

Within its ranks, this tendency offers two alternate options, the nuclear freeze movement's option of unilateral U.S. disarmament and the Henry Kissinger-Peter Carrington option of first triggering the crisis full scale by deploying the Pershing II missiles in Europe some time this year and then "managing" the crisis under the auspices of the notorious "Kissinger back channel." The efforts of the nuclear freeze peaceniks and of the Kissinger-Carrington MAD maniacs are harmonized by the activities of Gen. Brent Scowcroft under the cover of the Scowcroft Commission's Report to the President.

Both Kissinger and the "peaceniks" share a commitment to prevent at all costs President Reagan from implementing his decision to scrap the MAD doctrine and replace it with his version of Mutually Assured Survival, a doctrine which would be based on the development and deployment of sophisticated relativistic beam weapons capable of "rendering

intercontinental ballistic missiles impotent and obsolete." Both Kissinger and the peaceniks enjoy the full support and appreciation of the Andropov leadership in Moscow, as well as the support and appreciation of Secretary George Shultz's State Department.

Neither the Kissinger Republicans nor the Harriman Democrats appear to have any particular objections to a full-blown Cuban missile crisis. They are, however, unified in near-hysterical opposition to the prospect of seeing MAD replaced by Reagan's doctrine of Mutually Assured Survival, first announced in his history-making March 23 speech to the nation. In a letter to certain newspaper editors, published in the May 3 *Christian Science Monitor* and other locations, the President pinpointed with precision the core issue which has unhinged his Kissinger-Republican and Harriman-Democrat opponents and their Moscow cothinkers in this matter. "I cannot help but believe," the President wrote, "that strategic defense holds out new hope for removing nuclear terror from our lives. With the prospect of defense against nuclear weapons comes also the prospect of negotiations not just to restrain and codify the balance of terror, but to eliminate these weapons from the face of the earth."

This was not the first time the President had publicly offered the Soviet leadership serious arms reduction talks in the context of mutually agreed upon development of defensive systems which would end the era of nuclear terror and its codified military doctrine, MAD. Both he and Defense Secretary Weinberger have reiterated the offer to share with the Soviets technologies relevant to anti-missile defenses. The Soviet Union selected the occasion of a Soviet-British Roundtable meeting in London at the end of April to formally reject this offer by the United States, and, in a statement by Andropov spokesman Aleksandr Bovin, brand anti-missile defenses as "destabilizing."

The spirit of Mr. Bovin's rejection of the President's offer to share defensive technologies with the U.S.S.R. was shared by Sen. Malcolm Wallop (R-Wyo.) during a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on anti-missile beam weapons on May 1. Wallop, while professing support for an early deployment of space-based chemical lasers, apparently does not share the President's interest in utilizing these new technologies for the purpose of stabilizing strategic relations between the nuclear superpowers. Such sharing, in Wallop's and Bovin's reckoning, would definitely make the doctrine of MAD obsolete.

While Mr. Bovin was in London meeting with the Royal Institute of International Affairs, his immediate superior, Georgii Arbatov of Moscow's U.S.A.-Canada Institute and rumored successor of Andrei Gromyko as Soviet foreign minister, was in the United States meeting with two Kissinger cronies, William Hyland and Gen. Brent Scowcroft himself, at a Dartmouth Conference in Denver, Colorado. One of the immediate byproducts of the Scowcroft-Arbatov collaboration was a rather crude letter to the President, drafted by

Sens. Charles Percy (R-Ill.), William Cohen (R-Me.), and Sam Nunn (D-Ky.) and Reps. Albert Gore (D-Tenn.), Les Aspin (D-Wis.), and Norman Dicks (D-Wash.), telling Reagan: "We are concerned that the administration has not responded more fully to the arms control recommendations of the Scowcroft panel," especially its proposal to abandon multiple-warhead missiles for the smaller single-warhead missile dubbed "Midgetman," as was demanded by Henry Kissinger.

The Scowcroft Report

It was an intervention typical of the collaboration these days between Kissinger Republicans and Harriman Democrats around the "bipartisan," Kissinger-inspired Scowcroft Commission Report. That report's objective has been exclusively to dampen the impact of the President's March 23 speech and to return the United States to MAD-based arms control policies. Since the publication of the Scowcroft Report, the Kissinger Republicans in the Senate have been mobilized to use that report for the purpose of preventing the President from either going ahead with the development of the new defensive weapons systems or altering the doctrinal context in which future arms control negotiations can be conducted.

Senator Larry Pressler's office has been insisting that the single most important clause of the Scowcroft Report is that which recommends that future arms-control negotiations should be based on counting the number of nuclear warheads on both sides and on trying to limit those—a typical MAD-based argument. The basis of arms-control negotiations up until now has been the number of launchers of both sides rather than that of warheads (also an MAD-based concept). If future negotiations are to be based on President Reagan's doctrine of Mutually Assured Survival, the primary interest of the negotiating teams will be on how best to cooperate in achieving technologies to knock out missiles, and not the number of missiles in possession of each side.

As of now, the President is occupying the morally "high ground," as he himself, the Defense Secretary, Senator Armstrong, and many others have been quick to point out. This matter is politically very important in light of the disastrous "pastoral letter" that the American Bishops' Conference managed to produce the first week in May. The immorality of Kissinger and company's MAD lies in the fact that it conceives of defense exclusively by means of "retribution," while Reagan's approach of Mutually Assured Survival views defense as a matter of protecting human lives against nuclear missiles (see Secretary Weinberger's speech, page 54). This moral point may have been missed by most in the midst of the past weeks' tumultuous developments, but, in the long run, it will have a far-reaching effect. The Jesuit "liberation theology" plurality among U.S. Catholic bishops has been outmaneuvered by the President of the United States on a matter of lasting moral importance (see statement by *EIR* founder Lyndon LaRouche, page 51).

Andropov's deluded allies

What both the Kissinger Republicans and Harriman Democrats have grossly misestimated are the current intentions and concerns of their immediate policy partners in the Andropov leadership in Moscow. Because of this misestimation, Kissinger Republicans and Harriman Democrats are crucially deluded about the role they hope to play in the soon-to-erupt missile crisis. It is going to be a crisis different by far from what they currently envisage.

In a recent war-game simulation of Soviet leadership reaction patterns played in Ottawa, Canada, the following features of Soviet strategic thinking were identified: the current Andropov-centered consensus believes that it has achieved a marginal but crucial strategic advantage over the United States which is likely to continue in the next few years; it also believes that it is faced with serious internal economic problems which if not overcome, and if correlated with a possible U.S. economic recovery, will relegate the U.S.S.R. into secondary status within four to five years.

If the United States follows Reagan's doctrine of Mutually Assured Survival, it will abandon its recent "Aquarian" post-industrial orientation and take off economically in a dramatic way. If the United States does not go with Reagan's doctrine, it continues MAD which makes the deployment of Pershing II missiles in Europe *doctrinally* unacceptable to the U.S.S.R., since it is the doctrinal context of MAD which makes them "first strike" weapons, not their technical specifications.

Given these constraints, the Andropov-centered leadership has essentially two alternatives: either go along with Reagan's Mutually Assured Survival and witness a major industrial and technological revival of the United States and thus acquiesce in "second-rate" status for the U.S.S.R. within four to five years, or go all out to utilize the U.S.S.R.'s existing and projected temporary military superiority. Such utilization must achieve two simultaneous Soviet policy objectives: First, prevent at all costs the implementation of the announced Reagan doctrine, i.e., ensure that the United States remains locked in the Kissingerian MAD and cognate doctrinal refinements (flexible response, forward defense, theatre nuclear war, and similar extensions of MAD). Second, prevent at all costs the deployment of Pershing IIs in Europe. Both of these Soviet commitments are of equal priority, and under the Andropov-consensus commitments, there cannot be tradeoffs between the two.

The Geneva talks

There is one further stipulation in the currently adopted Soviet strategic posture: the prevention of the Pershing II deployment must not be achieved by negotiating a removal of the Soviet SS-20s, since such removal would negate the existing margin of Soviet military superiority, the very premise of the above-mentioned commitments. *Therefore the Soviets are committed to a failure of the Geneva negotiations.* This commitment is evident in Marshal Ustinov's latest East

Berlin speech, in the East German decision to cancel Erich Honecker's visit to West Germany and in Andropov's own May 3 procedural proposals for the Geneva talks.

The May 4 "nuclear freeze" vote in the United States House of Representatives, as modified by the "Levitas amendment" in the last minute before the vote, adds a further dilemma for the Soviet strategists. The freeze resolution in its present form calls for a freeze of nuclear weapons for both the United States and the U.S.S.R., *only after an agreement for arms reduction has been reached at Geneva*, and it thus has a *Doppelbeschluss* character identical to the 1979 NATO resolution regulating the deployment of the Pershing II (*Doppelbeschluss* refers to the "two-track" decision to prepare to install the Pershings while pursuing arms control—ed.). These missiles are to be deployed only in case the Geneva talks fail. As matters stand now, the Andropov leadership could achieve a freeze of nuclear weapons and could prevent the deployment of the Pershing IIs if they reach an arms reduction agreement at Geneva, a result which they are now committed to avoiding.

Thus, the following irony defines the relation between the Andropov leadership on the one side and the Kissinger Republicans and Harriman Democrats on the other. Both sides are committed to cooperation in order to kill President Reagan's doctrine of anti-missile defense and to ensure the continuation of MAD. Beyond this point, the Soviets are absolutely committed to preventing the deployment of Pershing IIs. The Soviets' Kissingerian and Harrimanite partners are not clear in this matter; they are increasingly bending toward favoring the Pershing II deployment within the logic of MAD. This is where Andropov and Andropov's Western dupes will ultimately part ways. It will happen in the following way.

Kissinger's mentor, Lord Carrington has in mind to go along with the deployment of a limited number of Pershings. He is aware, of course, that this would trigger a Cuban missiles crisis. He is willing to have such a crisis in order to employ the "Kissinger back channel" for crisis-management negotiations with Moscow which will kill for good President Reagan's doctrine and thus make the Soviets happy by preserving MAD.

Carrington is wrong, because in their current frame of mind, the Soviets will absolutely not allow any Pershing deployment. Andropov's policy is to proceed with a Cuban missiles crisis now, long before the approach of Pershing deployments—which brings up to the point that Vice-President Bush was making. Neither Carrington nor Kissinger is qualified to negotiate the kind of crisis Professor Andropov is cooking up right now. That crisis will either be resolved by both superpowers agreeing to adopt Reagan's doctrine of Mutually Assured Survival or it will not be resolved, in which case we shall have an eventual World War Three or the devastating humiliation of one of the two superpowers. In any of those cases, Kissinger's, Carrington's, and Harriman's talents will prove irrelevant.